

COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES Minutes for December 19, 2011.
Minutes prepared by Roslyn Alic-Batson, Internal Services Department.

The CODI Meeting was called to order by Mr. Ernie Martinez, Chairman, at 1:40 pm.

Attendance: District 1 Commissioner Jordan: John Miller: Present
District 2 Commissioner Monestime: Jackson David: Present
District 3 Commissioner Edmonson: Jose Granda: Present
District 4 Commissioner Heyman: Vacant CODI Seat
District 5 Commissioner Barreiro: Jose "Ernie" Martinez (Chair): Present
District 6 Commissioner Sosa: Pedro Rodriguez: Present
District 7 Commissioner Suarez: Harry Horgan: Excused
District 8 Commissioner Bell: Jesus Garcia: Present
District 9 Commissioner Moss: Ron Fulton: Present
District 10 Commissioner Souto: Dr. Sam Kohlenberg: Present
District 11 Commissioner Martinez: Denise Valkema: Present
District 12 Commissioner Diaz: Marilyn Larrieu: Excused
District 13 Commission Bovo: Alan Rigerman: Present

Approval of Minutes: The Chairman called for approval of the minutes of the 11/30/11 meeting. Motion to approve November minutes made by Mr. Jesus Garcia, second by Ms. Denise Valkema. Motion passed.

Approval of Agenda: The Chairman called for a motion to approve the agenda for the 12/19/11 meeting. Motion to approve December agenda made by Mr. Pedro Rodriguez, second by Dr. Sam Kohlenberg. Motion passed.

Reports from Standing Committee Chairs:

The Chairman stated that, due to the shorter interval than usual between the November meeting and this meeting, there was only one committee meeting held.

Access: Access Committee Chairman Jackson David a brief synopsis of the items discussed at the meeting. Items included an update from Public Works, a discussion about the reduction of disabled parking spaces in the Miami Parking Authority lot on the east side of the Stephen P. Clark Center, and a letter to be sent to Commissioners. Heidi Johnson-Wright gave an update on the parking issue, explaining that the spaces have been restored. Also, the County is entering into an agreement with MPA requiring MPA to provide 16 compliant accessible spaces in the lot. Mr. David stated that the committee is waiting to receive policies from local homeless shelters regarding their ability to accommodate persons with disabilities.

Education and Outreach: This committee did not meet.

Transportation: This committee did not meet.

Housing: This committee did not meet. However, Chairman Pedro Rodriguez gave an update on a rental housing complex with accessible units which recently opened. He stated that the Committee has three goals:

1. Increase number of rental units of affordable housing to disability community.
2. Increase opportunities for people with of disabilities to purchase low income properties.
3. Create a centralized database of available accessible housing.

A discussion ensued between Chairman Martinez and Mr. David regarding Mr. David chairing both the Access and the Outreach/Education committees. Chairman Martinez then appointed Harry Horgan to chair the Outreach/Education committee.

Membership Committee: Committee Chair Dr. Sam Kohlenberg reported that he did not know the status of Commissioner Heyman's pending appointment to CODI. Ms. Johnson-Wright reported that she had recently

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spoken to the Commissioner's staffer in charge of appointments. She was told that an appointment would likely be made sometime in January 2012. Dr. Kohlenberg stated that Mr. John Miller had joined the committee, whose members include Pedro Rodriguez and Jackson David.

Chairperson's Report: The Chairman stated that he did not have anything to report. Mr. Fulton asked if the Chairman had met with anyone in the Mayor's Office. Mr. Martinez responded that he had not.

Old Business:

- **Marlins:** The Chairman stated that the Marlins organization had indicated that CODI would be given a tour of the ballpark sometime in February. The Chair asked about the Marlins and their ticketing policies for accessible seating. Ms. Johnson-Wright stated that the Marlins are required to comply with the Department of Justice's new ticketing regulations and that ticketing policies will be incorporated into the Marlins' policy manual regarding providing services to fans with disabilities. She is waiting to hear from Wayne Meyer, the Marlin's accessibility consultant, about when a draft of the manual will be ready for review. The Chair inquired whether the tour would be open to any members of the disability community or just for CODI I. Mr. Jesus Garcia asked if the tour could be limited to CODI members, since it is the County's official advisory group on disability. Mr. Miller agreed with Mr. Garcia. Mr. Fulton asked if CODI could have a draft of the policy manual before the tour. Ms. Johnson-Wright answered affirmatively. Mr. Jose Granda asked how to avoid having someone pretend they are disabled to get a discount. Mr. Rodriguez stated that disabled community pays a higher price for lower price seating at most venues. The issue will be referred to the Access Committee
- **Taxis:** Chairman Martinez recently had a personal emergency and needed emergency transportation. He called STS but then decided to call a taxi. STS arrived three hours later, but the taxi never arrived. He stated there are real issues with accessible taxi service and the disabled community. Ms. Johnson-Wright asked for clarification on what exactly the issues are. She gave an explanation on why some wheelchair accessible cabs are not available in the evenings or overnight. Some medallions have been issued to independent operator/owners that are not radio dispatched and operate only during very limited hours because their cab also serves as the family car. Recently, a few medallions have been issued to owners who are required to be radio dispatched and to have GPS and credit card payment capability. This should help service improve, albeit slowly. Mr. Garcia asked how many medallions have been issued and how many are wheelchair accessible. The Chair wants the issue to come back to CODI to look at the pertinent legislation. Ms. Johnson-Wright stated that CODI's questions can best be answered by Consumer Services, which regulates taxi service. She also reminded CODI about the ordinance revisions by Commissioner Heyman that increased penalties for taxi drivers who refuse service to people with disabilities, such as when a person who is blind is denied service because he/she is accompanied by a service dog. Mr. Garcia requested an actual count of the vehicles and the amount of medallions issued. Mr. Miller suggested that this issues and questions be referred to the Access Committee. The Chairman suggested the issue go to the Transportation Committee instead. Mr. Garcia will send an email to Ms. Johnson-Wright stating exactly what information he would like to have, his availability for a future meeting, and which County staff he would like to attend the meeting.
- **Paratransit:** Mr. Garcia stated that bids were submitted for the STS RFP on 12/16/11. Mr. Garcia reviewed the five addenda and he did not see anything unusual. Namita Uppal, Procurement Contracting Manager, reported that three proposals were submitted. The companies are First Transit, Transportation America and Professional Medical Transportation Corp. She stated that the proposals are public information and they are federally funded so local preference does not apply. Several members requested copies of the proposals. Ms. Uppal will scan and send to Ms. Johnson-Wright who will then distribute. The Chairman wanted to discuss disputes under paratransit, that sometimes they do not include paratransit riders. He asked Mr. Garcia to review this issue in the Transportation Committee.
- **Administrative Support:** The Chairman stated brought up the issue of the ADA Office's administrative support to CODI. At one point the ADA office was fully staffed, but now that is not the case. In addition to

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the basic functions of administrative support, CODI has members with significant disabilities who need accommodations. Ms. Johnson-Wright has spoken to the GSA Director, who has spoken to the ISD Director, requesting Ms. Alic-Batson's assistance in producing minutes for the committees. She stated that, even if County staff can produce minutes for the committee meeting, it will not be able to accommodate meetings taking place off site, such as at the Center for Independent Living. Ms. Johnson-Wright stated that after Ms. Alic-Batson listens to the audio recording of CODI meetings, she then produces typed draft minutes. Ms. Johnson-Wright then needs a significant amount of time to produce the polished set of minutes currently in front of the members. In order to distribute the workload, the committee chairs agreed that they could polish and edit a rough typed draft of minutes submitted to them by Ms. Alic-Batson. Ms. Johnson-Wright asked if there were other outstanding issues that she should bring back to her superiors. Mr. Miller and Mr. Rodriguez stated that the ADA Office staff provided significant support to CODI in the past and they would like to have this restored, such as ADA Office staff attending the committee meetings. Mr. Fulton stated that in the past Ilene Hyams was available to advise CODI at meetings, especially committee meetings. Ms. Johnson-Wright responded that members can call her and she will deal with whatever issues they may have.

New Business: Mr. Rigerman spoke about accessible parking and wanted to know if a letter can be sent to the County Police Director about enforcing the accessible parking laws. He asked for CODI's permission to send a letter on behalf of CODI and work with the Access Committee on this issue.

Mr. Rigerman spoke about the baby stroller parking issue to have a two inch reflective sticker to be added to parking spots to indicate that people with disabilities who have accessible parking placards can park there. Mr. Rigerman made a motion to place a 2 inch x 2 inch reflective sticker on the baby stroller parking space signs, second by Mr. Fulton. Motion passed. This item will be presented to Access Committee for action.

CODI elections: The Chairman asked the Membership Committee to serve as the Nominating Committee, which is being tasked with providing a slate of officer nominations in January, with voting to take place in February.

Open Forum: Mr. Hudson Gaulman, Jr. (P.O. Box 01-0968, Miami, FL 33101) raised an issue regarding the Brownsville Metro Station. He said that there is no way for wheelchair users to access the station. He has spoken to several people at the County to no avail. He would like to have something done at that station.

Mr. Tim Werner (2250 NW 161 Terr., Pembroke Pines, FL) Advocacy Committee Chair of the Paralyzed Veterans Associations of Florida, Inc. spoke regarding stickers on gas pumps so that people with disability can call in to get assistance at gas stations. A law requiring this is being passed in Hillsborough County. He is working on legislation for Broward and Palm Beach County. He would like to have something similar in Miami-Dade County. Mr. Werner was invited to make a presentation to the Access Committee.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:03 pm.

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